The Nikos Kazantzakis Chair

Center for Modern Greek Studies
San Francisco State University

Μαντατοφόρος*

ΕΔΡΑ ΝΙΚΟΥ ΚΑΖΑΝΤΖΑΚΗ

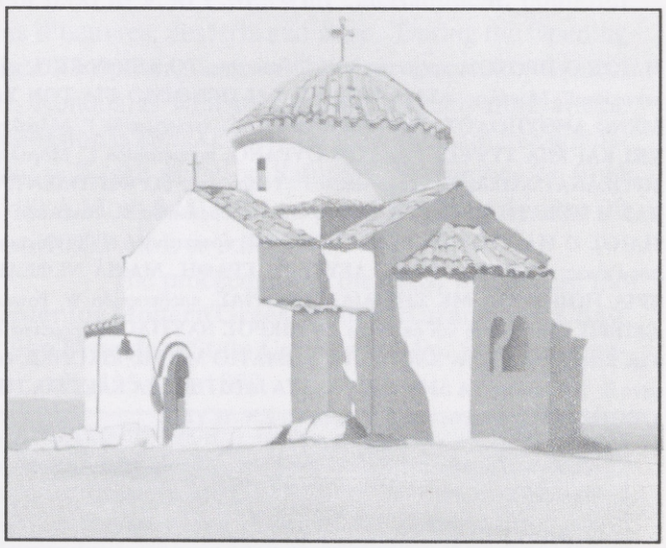
Modern Greek Studies Foundation

Summer, 1996 | MANDATOPHOROS: Bearer of news, messenger | Vol. 12, No. 3

Center Director Thanasis Maskaleris Named Kazantzakis Research Professor

Beginning with the Fall 1996 semester **Dr. Martha Klironomos** will assume her duties as Director of the Center for Modern Greek Studies and Assistant Professor of Modern Greek Studies and Comparative Literature at San Francisco State University. Retiring Center Director **Thanasis Maskaleris** will remain associated with the Center/Kazantzakis Chair, on a limited-time volunteer basis, as **Kazantzakis Research Professor**. Professor Maskaleris will work with the new director toward developing the academic and cultural programs of the Center. He will also be assisting the **Modern Greek Studies Foundation** in fundraising for the Kazantzakis Chair Endowment.

— L.G.



The Art Work of Gregory Kondos

Modern Greek Studies Foundation to hold second annual Art Show at Fort Mason

The second annual Hellenic Artists exhibit, sponsored by the **Modern Greek Studies Foundation** will again be held at the **Fort Mason Foundation Center** in San Francisco, on Friday through Sunday, September 27-29, 1996.

The exhibit will feature previously unexhibited paintings and sculptures by artists of Hellenic ancestry. Over 20 artists have been invited to participate in the showing under the auspices of the **Hellenic International Artists' Foundation of Sacramento**.

This year's honored artist will be noted landscape painter **Gregory Kondos**. Recognized as one of the most prominent landscape artists in California, he has won numerous prizes and has works in permanent collections of many museums, including the **Yosemite Museum**, where he has been a member of the Artist-in-Residence Program since 1989. Mr. Kondos was also recently elected to the **National Academy of Design** and will be featured this fall in a PBS special program.

Raised in Sacramento by Greek immigrant parents, **Kanela and Steve Kondos**, Mr. Kondos studied art at **Sacramento City College**, and later received his bachelor's and master's degrees in art from the **California State University, Sacramento**. He then taught at Sacramento City College for 27 years and was the founder and director of the campus gallery. With fellow artist and friend, **Wayne Thiebaud**, Mr. Kondos founded the **Artists' Cooperative Gallery** (now the **Artists' Contemporary Gallery**), on of the earliest showcases for aspiring artists in the Sacramento area.

Continued on page 3...

The Legacy of Odysseas Elytis

With the recent passing of Greek national poet and **1979 Nobel Prize Laureate Odysseas Elytis** (born 1911 in Heraklion, Crete), much anticipated is a spate of reflections and critical reassessments of his rich and varied body of work, which has not received as much attention as that of other Greek poets of similar stature such as Constantinos Kavafis and Giorgos Seferis. Indeed, Elytis' poetry poses a challenge to the interpretive skills of the non-specialist and specialist alike due to the complexities that mark his poetic voice. A sampling of poems from his most well-known collections such as **Orientations** (1940), **Sun the First** (1943), **The Axion Esti** (1959), **Maria Nephele** (1978) and **The Little Mariner** (1985) contain elements commonly ascribed to the avant-garde and modernist schools of writing, especially those which exhibit revolutionary modes of poetic expression. At the same time, commentators have situated Elytis' poetry within the key debates that have taken place within Greek cultural nationalist politics as they have taken shape since the 1930's: the definition of "Greekness" ("hellenikotita"); the re-definition of the Greek oral and literary legacies, which comprise an implicit selectivity among the ancient, Byzantine and demotic traditions; the role of history and territoriality in representing Greek national identity.

But above all, Elytis accentuates the aesthetic qualities of the Greek archipelago and landscape. In his essays, for example, he remarks how "Greece is above all else, light and space." "The Aegean...", he observes, " is made up of matter or spirit drawn towards essence". The mere mention of the Aegean in his work attaches itself to an idealism based on how our senses perceive its very physicality, a site which we instantaneously judge to be beautiful.

While critical commentary has been limited, Elytis' work, as that of many other Greek poets, has won popularity both within Greece and abroad. His poetry has been translated into many foreign languages — over 80 editions have been published to date. An indication of his popularity can also be seen in the numerous poems which have been set to music by composers such as Manos Hatzidakis, Mikis Theodorakis, Yannis Markopoulos and Angelique Ionatos, illustrating how poetry continues to play an important role in Greek public culture.

This Fall, the Center for Modern Greek Studies is planning a program in which we shall honor Elytis and his immense contribution to Modern Greek letters. We hope you will join us in commemorating this extraordinary poet.

— Martha Klironomos

ODYSSEAS ELYTIS
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Ο ΟΔΥΣΣΕΑΣ ΕΛΥΤΗΣ

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Elytis' Poetry Set to Music

1. Mikis Theodorakis: **Mikres Kyklades**
2. Mikis Theodorakis: **To Axion Esti**
3. Elias Andriopoulos: **Orientations**
4. Notis Mavroudis: **Heroic & Elegiac Song for the Lost 2nd Lieutenant of the Albanian Campaign**
5. Yannis Markopoulos: **Sun the First**
6. Dimitris Laghios: **The Sovereign Sun**
7. Arghyris Kounadis: **Six and One Regrets for the Sky** — (Elytis reads the poems)

Odysseas Elytis

Modern Greek Studies Foundation Art Show, Continued from page 1...

Describing his work, Mr. Kondos has said: "If you look at my work, you will find qualities like quietness and cleanliness, but, above all, you'll find that I'm a loner...I think it reflects in my work, this lonely quality."

Opening ceremonies and reception for the Art Show and Exhibit will be held on Friday, September 27, from 6:00 to 9:30 P.M., with entertainment, bountiful hors d'oeuvres, desserts and wine. During the Opening Night Reception guests will have an opportunity to meet Mr. Kondos as well as the other participating aritsts. Admission is $35.00. General viewing, with free admission, will take place on Saturday, September 28 from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and on Sunday, September 29 from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

The proceeds from the event will benefit the **Center for Modern Greek Studies/Kazantzakis Chair at San Francisco State University**. For more information, call 415-338-1892.

MANDATOPHOROS is issued quarterly by the **Center for Modern Greek Studies/Modern Greek Studies Foundation**. Address: Center for Modern Greek Studies, College of Humanities, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132. Editors: Linda Gibbons, Thanasis Maskaleris. Printed by **Alpha Print**, San Francisco.

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OF THE AEGEAN — Odysseas Elytis

Love
The archipelago
And the prow of its foam
And the seagull of its dream
On its highest mast the sailor waves
A song

Love
Its song
And the horizons of its voyage
And the echo of its nostalgia
On love's wettest rock the betrothed awaits
A ship

Love
Its ship
And the freedom from care of its etesian winds
And the jib of its hope
On its highest undulation an island rocks
The homecoming

— Translated by Kimon Friar

Modern Greek Studies Courses - Fall 1996

GRE 250 **Beginning Modern Greek I**
Instructor: Effie Kalafatis HUM 579
Mondays & Wednesdays 2:10-3:30 P.M.

GRE 365 **Intermediate Modern Greek III**
Instructor: Martha Klironomos HUM 381
Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:35-1:50 P.M.

WCL 445 **Modern Greek Literature**
Instructor: Martha Klironomos HUM 212
Wednesdays 6:00-8:45 P.M

Classes for the Fall semester begin Wednesday **August 28, 1996**. Members from the community are encouraged to attend the above courses. For additional information, call the Center for Modern Greek Studies at (415) 338-1892.

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